A moſt horrible & deteſtable Murther committed by a bloudie minded man vpon his ovvne VVife: and moſt ſtrangely Reuealed by his Childe that was vnder fiue yeares of age: At Mayfield in the Countie of Suſſex: For which hee was executed the 27. of Februarie now laſt paſt, at Greeneſted in the ſame Countie.

Gough. Addit. Sussex.

CA·BODLEIAN·

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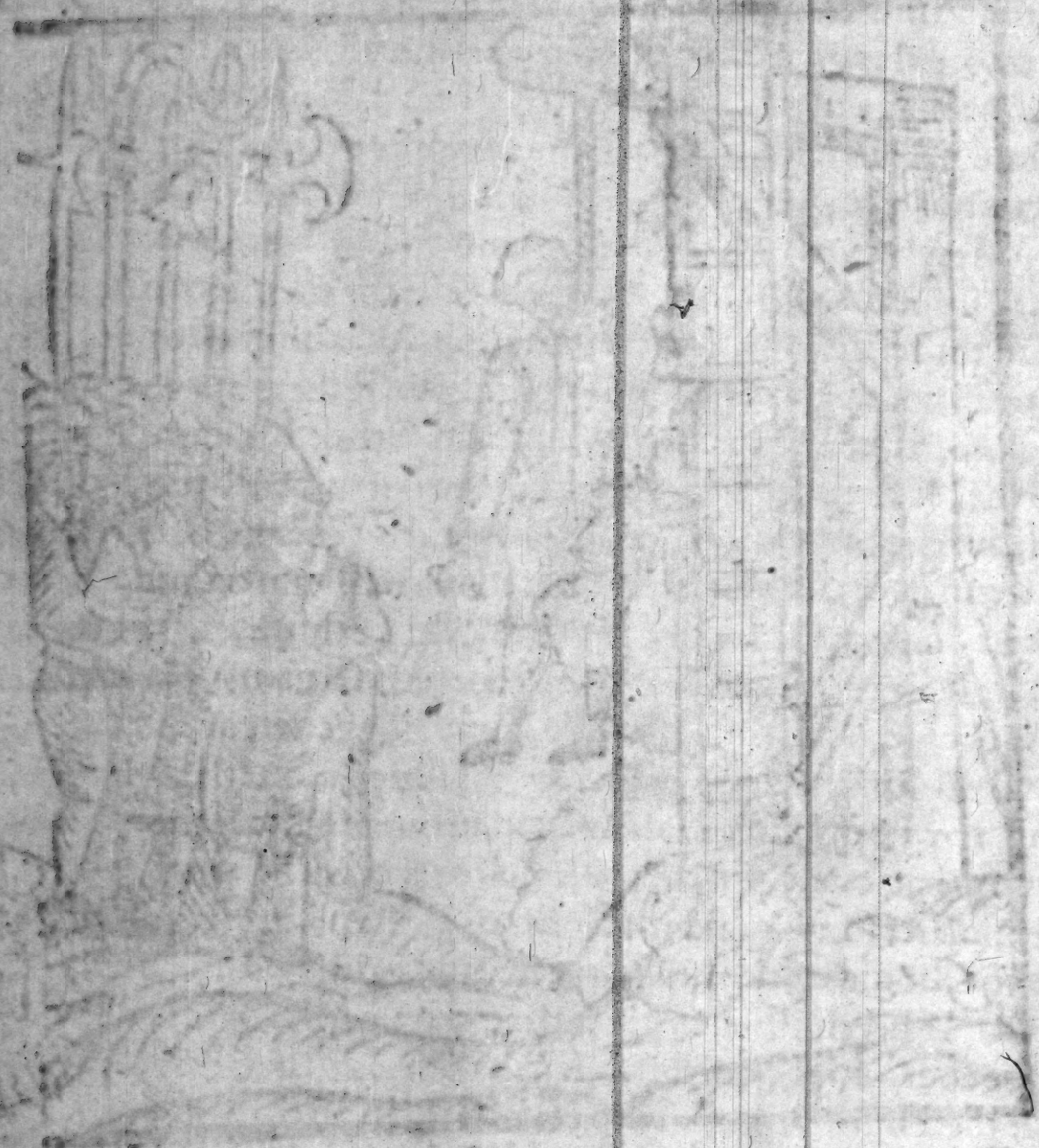

To the Christian Reader peace in Christ.

WHAT Christian indued with any motion of pittie my louing Country men, that seeth and noteth with aduise, the many mischances and cruell murthers in these times committed, and with a hart charged with griefe, and eyes gushing flouds of teares, vntaignedly desires not to se the comming of that dredful Iudge which will and must come: That this Tempter with alluring baites, intice no more those children of his to such horrible sinnes, as he daily doth. How many most execrable murthers haue there beene done of late time, which hath bin published for our example to the world, thereby to put vs in minde of our duties to God, & withhold vs from like trespasses, by viewing their shamefull ends, whom deseruedly the Law cuts off for such offences. But so rageth the enemie of mankinde, day and night restlesly with his temptations, that he ceaseth not still to vrge vs to all mischiefe. The sonne desiring his fathers liuing, and to be great before his time, murthereth him: the frend, his deerest frend: the wife the husband, and the husband the wife: brother against sister, and sister the brother: wherby the world is growen to such a passe, that no frend dare commit anie secret to his most neerest and deerest frend, without some iealozie of his truth and faithfulnes. If hee haue money, he feareth to reueale it to his wife, his seruants, his children, his frend, or anie, doubting least the knowledge thereof shall abridge his dayes. If he haue a wife which as himselfe he loueth, although he see with his owne eyes her chast life giuen ouer to the lechor, and another inioy that, onely proper to himselfe: yet with harts griefe, is he faine to smother so vyle and most odious abuse, doubting the reuealing thereof should worke his shame in the world, and his life thereby dangered. If his children neglect their dueties, he is forced to beare with their enormities, least it happen to them as to manie fathers, who haue lost their liues, in seeking to correct such head-strong youth. Is there not the like in seruants, whose credite with their maysters hath been admirable, that in the end haue enriched themselues, and beggered their Masters. Ah would euerie estate would but look into himselfe,

selfe, and euerie one in himselfe seeke a reformation. Then should the Vsurers flocke decrease, when Charitie doth abound. The couetous Grasier and Farmer should take such reasonable prizes for their corne and cattell, that their poore Brethren handicrafts men, might liue by them without oppression. Lawiers should not then bee so followed, neither of poore, or rich, which euerie Tearme from their owne habitations follow them manie myles to their great damage, in neglecting their busines at home, and large expences abroad, running like a bond man (bound by dutie) after Lawiers, caples, to beseech them to take their moneyes, fed with a beliefe of good successe in their sutes, when oftentimes it proues to their vndooing, with their wiues and families: and when it is too late, then they repent their follies, and crye out on that head-strong vaine, that would not suffer them to yeeld to reason. And then what haue they, but a flout of him that had their money, & they themselues become a scorne to their neighbors, a griefe to theyr frends, and to their children a common rebuke. These bee the frutes of our dayes, which the Lord for his mercie giue vs grace to foresee, & seeing to auoyd them: forgetting the world, and to minde the ioyes of the glorious Kingdome of Christ, whom wee with griefe of minde sorrow to offend, which hath so highly esteemed of vs, to giue his precious blood for our redemption. A notable and most worthy mirrour to all his, to frame our lines thereafter, if we had grace to look into it: which God grant. And that the falls of others may make vs to leaue those sinnes so deeply ingrafted in our harts, that in the last daye we may reape the reward of our charitie and other good deedes to our needie Brethren extended: taking such firme hold on that Anchor of Faith, Christ Iesus, that neither Pope or Diuell maye haue power to harme vs: and we all freed from that heauie vengeance, which is likely without speedie amendment to fall vpon vs: which though it be deferred for a season, will come when wee thinke least thereon. Let vs therefore (like the fiue wise Virgins) be readie furnished against that day, that we may be readie with the Bridegroome to enter.

And now to the matter which we haue to intreate, the truth whereof here particularly set downe, may moue all pitifull harts to lament: which thus followeth.

A most

A MOST HORRIBLE AND detestable Murther committed by a bloudie minded Man, vpon his owne VVife.

IN the towne of Mayfielde in the countie of Sussex, there dwelled one Raph Meaphon, whose trade was to Digge in the Iron mines and to make coles. This Raphe being at his worke in the wood making coales, as he vsually did, about fiue of the clocke on the eight of October now last past, in the euening beeing darke, as some in their examinations and confessions on their oathes before the Crowner Master Magnus Fowle saith, returning vnto them about nine of the clocke that night. But comming home, his wife with her sonne of fiue yeares of age, or scarse so much, beeing a bed, he knocked, and was let in, where he fel to rayling and chiding with her: and in the end, whether it were a matter pretended, or otherwise, but lead thereunto by the Diuel, the ancient enemie of our saluation, which doubtlesse prouoked him therevnto, he drew out hys knife and cut her throate, and so leauing her weltring in her owne goare, went againe to his worke, without making any semblance of sorrow for this most odious murther, leauing

some candle or fire in such place of danger, that the house therwith was fired, which the neighbours adioyning and the whole towne came to quench, meruailing where the good man and his wife was that they heard of none of them, thinking them to bee from home. Amongst them that durst venture most, an honest woman named Jone Baylie, espying first the fire, cried out for helpe, who with hir neighbours did what shee coulde to saue the Childe which was like to perish with the fire: who when shee had recouered, they sought to saue the goodes: But little they coulde doo vnto it, but there was the deade bodie found, and the Constable a very honest man hauing viewed the same, coulde not tell what course to take to finde the murtherer, but sending for the Corosner, they examined this Jone Baylie to finde what they coulde of the death of the woman, who could say nothing: Then was the Child whose name was Ralph called after the name of his Father brought before them, and required to tell when his father came home, and the Boy without any blushing feare (as commonly is seene in Children) tolde them that his Father came home when his mother was a bed, and first vsed some churlish speech vnto hir, then he drew out his knife, cut hir throate and so left hir: describing in good order the bignes of the knife, and the colour of the haft, but wherefore his father did this wicked deede hee coulde not say any thing.

The

This Confession of the Boy being ended, they presently sent for his father from worke, and strictly examined him of the same, who stowtly and most audatiously denyed the fact: then beeing demaunded where hee was when his house was on fire, he answered hee was all day hard at his worke, and so continued his tale. Then the Cozoner required to haue a sight of his knife, which hee pulled out of his pocket, and was in all pointes for bignes, colour of haft, and all other markes euen as the Childe had before at large repeated vnto the said Cozoner.

Then beeing demaunded if that were his owne knife, hee saide no, hee borrowed the same: But the Childe affirmed it was his owne.

His fellowe workemen were hereupon likewise examined, who saide that about fiue a clocke the night before he left them, and returned not vnto them againe vntill it was nine: vpon which euident proofe, and the deede being so apparantly open by the Boy, he was for that night committed to the stockes in the towne, & the next day being more thoroughly againe examined in the cause, and the euidences beeing founde too apparant, yet hee still denied it: The Cozoner committed him to the Queenes Gaile at Lewes, from whence with other notozious malefactours not vnlike himselfe, hee was brought to Greenested on the foure and twentith day of Febzuarie last past,

where

where before the right Worſhipfull Baron Clarke, and Serieant Due Iudges of the Aſſiſes, hee was for the fact araigned, and on the euidence of his ſonne which was preſent before the Iudges with a voyce lawdable, which was in the child admired, hee deliuered the euidence as before, on which he was found guiltie and had iudgement, and on the 27. of Februarie, 1595. he was executed at Greenſted, in the Countie of Suſſex.

Thus God reueleth the wicked practiſes of men, who though the act bee kept neuer ſo ſecrete, to their great rebuke he diſcouereth: eſpeciall notes in ſcripture, and plaine examples we haue, how the Fowles of the Ayre, yea the ſtones in the wall ſhall declare ſuch horrible ſinnes, that the puniſhment due for the ſame may be worthely rewarded, as we ſee by this and many others: which I pray God may moue vs to repentance, and giue vs grace to eſchew the like, Amen.

FINIS.